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REMARKS ON THE POETIC FRAGMENTS (*JQR.*, IV, 53 ff.)

IN the new, fourth series of his Poetic Fragments from the Genizah, I. Davidson brings to light a number of very important and valuable poems for which he deserves thanks and recognition. These the serious scholar will never find in the eulogies of superficial readers, but in the vivid interest in his publications manifested by fellow scholars working in the same field, who, through their contributions, assist and help him in his endeavour to present the new texts to scientific investigation in a form as correct as possible. It is this consideration that induces me to write down the following remarks which partly are of a textual nature, partly concern the interpretation of difficult passages, and partly aim to establish the connexion, especially in the first poem, which is attributed to Elhanan b. Shemaryah (pp. 53–60).

On this poem I wish to remark the following¹:

1. 4 read **קָנָה** (Prov. 16. 16), and **נָעַר** for **צָעַר** (comp. Prov. 3. 21), both as infinitives.

ll. 12–13 read . . . **מַעֲבָר** . . . **רְקִים** . . . for the explanation comp. b. Erubin 55 a: **לֹא בְשָׁמִים הִיא לֹא תָמַצָּא בְנֵי רֹוח וְלֹא מַעֲבָר לִים**: **הִיא לֹא תָמַצָּא לֹא בְשָׁחָרִים וְלֹא בְתָנִירִים**.

כתיב בראש מרוימים ll. 15–16, comp. b. 'Aboda zarah 19 a: **בְּחִיבָּר עַל דָּרֶךְ** בְּתִיחַלָּה **בְּרַאשׁ מְרוּומִים וְלִבְטוּךְ עַל דָּרֶךְ**. The connexion with the preceding is clear: Blessed is he who devotes himself to the Torah (ll. 1 ff.), and thus endeavours to escape the punishment which is reserved for those who turn away from the holy tradition, i. e. the Torah (ll. 8–9), because she requires great assiduity and painstaking effort, and hence does not reveal herself to those who are addicted to commerce, behave haughtily, and

¹ These remarks were placed in the hands of the Editors before the appearance of the notes of Dr. Poznański in *JQR.*, N. S., IV, 481–3.

seek only their own advantage (ll. 10-14), but loudly calls those who call her and endeavour to explore her (ll. 15 ff.). — The poet starts to speak of the law-abiding in the singular, which is conditioned by the verse from Prov. 3. 13 placed at the head of the poem, but from l. 17 on he employs the plural, the departure being made possible through the words **במשכימים שבת מאחרים** (l. 16; comp. Ps. 127. 2).

l. 18, comp. Isa. 45. 3.

ll. 19-20, comp. b. Baba batra 8a: **ולו רגליך...** תלמידי חכמים שמכחתין רגליך מעיר וממדינה ללבז'ור תורה ישא מרבוותך לישא וליתן בדיבורותך של מקום קוצתו תלתלים... שחורות...

ll. 21-2, comp. b. 'Erubin 21 b: **כעובר...** במי שימושך פניו עליון בעורב

אימתי הן נטעים: 22. 23-4, comp. Yalkut on Ecclesiastes; **כמסמרות כוון שבעל תורה ננסם ללמוד והם מתאפסים לשמעו** Kohelet rabba *ad loc.*

ll. 25-6, **פְּאָרֹות = פְּאָרִים = פְּרִים** branches, offspring; for **שְׁהָרוּ הַפְּאָרִים מִהְזָּרִים** I would like to read *I*.

l. 29, **זרו** is connected—by a clever allusion to Ps. 85. 4—with the preceding: that they escape the snares which the misguided malefactors have spread out (see Prov. 1. 17). Accordingly also here the connexion is clear. The misguided malefactors are perhaps the Karaites; comp. the following note.

ll. 34, comp. p. Peah 2. 6: **אֲכַחֲבָה לְכֶם רֹבִי תֹּרְתִּי וְכִי רֹובָה** של תורה נכתבה אלא מרובים הן הדרשים מן הכתב מן הורבים. The poet accordingly inveighs against those who oppose the deduction of rules and maxims from the written Law by means of hermeneutic principles, hence against the Karaites.

l. 35, **וסורים** perhaps simply: they brood, write, and deviate from the right path.

ll. 37-8, read **סְנִינָה לְפָרָיו** for **סְנִינָה לְפָרָיו**, and for **סְנִינָה**. The meaning is as follows: The rebellious children deny what they have learned from their parents; the created (the children) tear down the fence which the creators (the parents) have erected.

ll. 39-40: They are strengthened in their godless behaviour

by the circumstance that they succeed in everything, that the earth belongs to them (according to Job 15. 19), that their fields are free from thorns, and their wine, oil, and perfume remain without dregs or lees, while the noble are exposed to all manner of trouble and danger (ll. 41 ff.). But despite their adversities the latter are not shaken in their pious belief and holy deeds (ll. 45 ff.). Thus also here the connexion is quite clear.

1. 43, comp. **הַיּוּ כּוֹרְכֵין כָּל אֶחָד בְּסֶפֶרְיוֹ וְשָׁוֹרְפֵין אֹתוֹ** in the narratives of the ten martyrs (e. g. in **מָדְרָשָׁ שָׁה''שׁ**, ed. Grünhut, Jerusalem, 1899, p. 3 b); Ps. 37. 20.

1. 44 read **מְהֻרִים** for **מְהֻרִיִּם**; the explanation is to be found in Ps. 44. 19 and 21.

1. 46, comp. **סְעוֹ חֲמָה לְמִנוֹחָות** in the well-known *Seliha* אָנָשִׁי אַמְנוֹנָה אַבְרוֹן. That **לְנָצְרִים** is written in the manuscript without **וּ** (after **צ**) is sufficient proof that the word is to be vocalized **לְנָצְרִים**, as plural of **נָצֵר**, sprout, here: children, offspring; to be explained in accordance with Ps. 17. 14.

ll. 47–50 seem to depict the welfare of the children who enjoy the merits of their parents. For them the poem is designed: by pointing out their strong, upright, pious, and law-abiding parents, whose merits are of avail to them, these young people should be spurred on to love the Torah and tradition, to lead a pious life and exercise noble deeds.

ll. 51–2 resume the thought of 1. 46, and the following lines emphasize the fact that the blessings enjoyed by the children correspond to the merits of their pious parents.

1. 52, **לְהַמּ** is to be deleted, since the lines consist of six words each (two parts of three words each). An exception constitutes 1. 1 a only, because a verse from the Bible is quoted *verbatim*.

With regard to the fragment of a divan by Solomon Ibn Gabirol on pp. 60–77 (such a fragment forms also Israel Levi's manuscript which is mentioned by me in *MGWJ.*, LV, 83), I wish to add the following:

No. 122 (p. 65), 1. 1: I cannot agree with Davidson's interpretation, and think therefore that—since **כָּאָבָ** is written without **ו** after **אָ**—we should read **בְּאָבָ אַרְבִּים** and consider it a reversed

genitive=אָרַי בְּאַבְּקָרָן, a pain for which there is no healing balsam; the higher it (the pain) ascends—i. e. the more vehement it becomes—the lower my heart descends.—l. 2 read עָרֵב as demanded by the *jeu de mots*. לְמָמוֹן of the manuscript seems to be better than לְמָוֹל (MS. Oxf.).—l. 4 I would prefer to read with MS. Oxf. וְעוֹד for, and with Davidson הַכָּאָב for the doubtful הַכּוֹב, but לְבָל for (Oxf.) וְכָל (וְכָל).

אָבָבָה וְכָל אָבָבָה לְבָל בְּעֵינִי הַכָּאָב חִיָּה
דְּמָעָה בְּעֵינִי הַכָּאָב חִיָּה

‘I weep, and the more I weep the pain animates my tears, so that they may not die out in my eyes’ (that they may not cease).

No. 123 (p. 67), line 2 should read:

וְגַהֲרָסִי שְׁתָחוֹת בְּתִיעֵן וְאַכְנוֹן עֲרֵיִוּ נִזְשָׁנוּ הַיּוֹם וְכָל-

comp. Gen. 18. 12.

No. 124 (p. 68) offers some good readings, with the exception of שְׁטַפְּנִי (l. 5).

No. 125 (p. 69), l. 3, read יַכְבֵּד for נַכְבֵּד; this is supported by the interesting parallel in Samuel ha-Nagid’s poem (Harkavy, p. 72, no. 36; in my edition, part 1, no. 13), verse 6: חַמְתִּי עַל לְבָבֵי כִּי בַּיּוֹם בְּוֹ כְּחֹל יַכְבֵּד וְלֹא אָכְלֵ שְׁתָחוֹת.—l. 6, by mistake the faulty text is given above, while the correct text is quoted below in note 70 as a wrong reading of the manuscript. לְקָד אַפְּרֵד, לְאַיִשׁ שְׁפָתִי מִתְחַתָּה is metrically correct, and may furthermore be explained by Prov. 10. 14; 13. 3; 18. 7: ‘Thee I tell, thou man of mischievous lips, &c.’; on the other hand לְקָד אַפְּרֵד, לְאַיִשׁ שְׁפָתִי מִתְחַתָּה is metrically incorrect, and yields no sense whatever in the passage before us.—l. 13 read יַוְצֵא מַלְעִים בְּשִׁיחָה (וְשִׁיחָה) לְאַיִשׁ מִתְחַתָּה.—l. 18, 33, שְׁרִים וְשָׁרוֹתִים (2 Sam. 19. 36; Eccles. 2. 8).

No. 126 (p. 71) offers numerous variants which cannot be examined here. I note only that the proposed emendation in note 87 to l. 9 is impossible both metrically and materially; לְכָלָות seems to me acceptable.—l. 11 read בְּשִׁיחָה (וְשִׁיחָה) וְשִׁיחָה.—l. 15, 25, וְזָקִים מִפְרָאָה בְּבָלָות and מִפְרָאָה.

A welcome gift from the two fragmentary poems by Joseph Ibn Sahl, the first of which suffered considerably. l. 3, read עַלִּי.

for לְיַע.—ll. 5–6 the comma is out of place; read חַיִל ?תִּזְלַל for חַיִל ?תִּזְלַל.—ll. 7–8, כְּדִירִיה, which is there only to fill up space and has no bearing on the sense of the verse, is problematical; perhaps it should be פְּרִירִיה; תְּנוּמָה is wrong and should be וְתַשְׁבַּב; וְתַשְׁכַּח is a miswriting of וְתַשְׁכַּח, while the lacuna is to be filled up with חַבְלִיה; the result being:

לֹא יִשְׁרַגְנֵן אֶל וְתַשְׁבַּב מְהֻרָה בָּמוֹ חַבְלִי תְּנוּמָה וְתַשְׁכַּח אֶת חַבְלִיהָ

The verse does not refer to the sun (note 20), but to the eye; חַבְלִיה and חַבְלִיה is a play on words.—ll. 9–10, יְדִידִיה is impossible, for it would be against the metre, since the first word of the following line—in my estimation—still belongs to the first hemistich. נְטוּ יְמִינָךְ is no doubt (according to the other reading מְטוּ יְמִינָךְ; אֲרִי (Cant. 5. 1) is correct as imp. fem. (referring to אַרְחָה (Cant. 5. 1). I read accordingly:

מְהֻרְתַּבְתָּךְ נְפָשֵׁי עַלְיִ פְּרוּד יְרוּדֵךְ וְהָוָא גַּטְעַ יְמִינָךְ אֲרִי מְנַד שְׁוֹתִילִיךְ i. e. ‘Why weepest thou, my soul, at the separation of thy friend? Thy right hand has planted the plant, therefore pluck the fruit of its (thy right hand’s) shoots’ (=thou thyself hast brought the grief upon thee; thou shouldst not have devoted thyself so much to thy friend!).—l. 11, נָוָם (sleep) is correct; as to the metaphor comp. *Diwan des Jeh. ha-Levi*, vol. I, Notes, p. 205 (to no. 87, ll. 21–2).

In the second fragment, which forms a remnant of the poem whose opening verse is cited by Moses Ibn Ezra (Davidson, p. 78, n. 10), l. 1, חַמְדוֹךְ=envy; comp. *op. cit.*, vol. I, Notes, p. 332.—l. 4 we cannot read שְׁמָה, as borne out by שְׁנָתֶם in the following line, but it also seems venturesome to construe וְהַאֲרִין in the sense of בְּזָה, sc. זָרָדֵךְ.—l. 12, אַבְדָּרֵיךְ is a miswriting of לְבָבֵךְ, sc. בְּלָשׁוֹן; וְזָה (=אַתָּה) and delete note 36.

As to the poems of Joseph Ibn Zaddik (pp. 82–91), Davidson should have considered that the superscription of the second poem precludes the assumption that also the first belongs to Ibn Zaddik. In reality the latter is the work of Judah ha-Levi, and is printed in my *Diwan*, vol. II, p. 29, no. 26. However,

the publication of a text containing new readings is very welcome. — In the second poem, l. 1, read **לְחַיִּים**. — The question whether the third poem is to be ascribed to Joseph Ibn Zaddik or Abraham Ibn Ezra must remain undecided. To l. 19 comp. my conclusions in the *Diwān*, vol. I, Notes, p. 29.

Finally, a few remarks to the poem of Joseph b. Shesheth (pp. 91–5): l. 6 is to be completed by **צָמֹדִים**, and l. 8 by **פְּחָדִים** (Job 15. 21). — l. 13, **הֲכִי**, is an affirmation (comp. my *Diwān*, I, Notes, p. 198), hence delete the interrogative sign. — l. 17, read **נִשְׁנָאִים** for **מִשְׁנָאִים**, — l. 24, **טָרֵד** for **נִטְרֵד**.

H. BRODY.

Prag.